

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 06942 01 OF 02 290925Z  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 06942

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E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, JO, US  
SUBJECT: KING HUSSEIN'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER:  
BACKGROUND COMMENTS BY ROYAL COURT CHIEF

REF: AMMAN 6941

SUMMARY: ROYAL COURT CHIEF SHARAF PROVIDED SOME BACKGROUND  
TO KING'S LETTER (REFTEL) BUT EMPHASIZED IT CAREFULLY  
DRAFTED AND STANDS ON ITS OWN. SHARAF REITERATED MAIN  
POINTS OF LETTER: JORDAN'S POSITION THAT ONLY A "CLEAR  
AND UNAMBIGUOUS" INDICATION THAT ISRAEL WILL END WEST  
BANK OCCUPATION AND PERMIT PALESTINIANS SELF-DETERMINATION  
WOULD ALLOW JORDAN TO PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATIONS;  
JORDAN'S OPPOSITION TO BEING ASKED TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS  
UNLESS REAL SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS AT SUMMIT; AND JORDAN'S  
PREFERENCE EVEN WITH A REASONABLY SUCCESSFUL CAMP DAVID TO  
RETURN TO A "COLLECTIVE APPROACH" TO NEGOTIATIONS. I  
STRONGLY URGED JORDAN TO KEEP AN OPEN MIND UNTIL AFTER  
CAMP DAVID AND SHARAF SAID IT WOULD DO SO BUT EMPHASIZED  
THAT JORDAN WANTS U. S. TO KNOW ITS POSITION CLEARLY  
BEFORE TALKS START. KING HAS SENT A SIMILAR LETTER TO  
SADAT. KING'S LETTER APPEARS TO LEAVE LITTLE  
ROOM FOR CAMP DAVID TALKS TO PRODUCE ENOUGH POSITIVE  
RESULTS FOR JORDAN TO ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH ONGOING  
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PAGE 02 AMMAN 06942 01 OF 02 290925Z

NEGOTIATIONS, UNLESS A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH OCCURS ON  
ISRAELI WILLINGNESS TO MAKE MAJOR CHANGE IN ITS POSITION  
ON WEST BANK WITHDRAWAL AND PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION  
-- A CHANGE WHICH JORDAN THINKS WILL NOT OCCUR. END  
SUMMARY.

1. IN PRESENTING KING HUSSEIN'S LETTER(REFTEL) AUGUST 28

FOR FORWARDING TO PRESIDENT CARTER, JORDANIAN ROYAL COURT CHIEF SHARAF(WHO UNDOUBTEDLY DID MAIN DRAFTING OF LETTER) ALLOWED ME TO READ LETTER IN HIS PRESENCE AND THEN TO ASK HIM SOME QUESTIONS REGARDING ITS CONTENTS.

2. SHARAF PREFACED HIS COMMENTS BY SAYING THAT LETTER WAS CAREFULLY DRAFTED AND IS MEANT TO STAND ON ITS OWN. HE SAID THAT KING'S INTENT IN LETTER IS TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE BUT IN CONTEXT OF ESSENTIALLY PESSIMISTIC ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION. HE SAID THAT LETTER HAS THREE MAIN SUBSTANTIVE POINTS: (1) THERE IS THE NEED TO HAVE A "CLEAN AND UN-AMBIGUOUS INDICATION" THAT AS A RESULT OF PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS, ISRAEL WILL END ITS OCCUPATION OF WEST BANK AND GAZA AND ALLOW PROCESS OF PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION WITH RECIPROCAL MUTUAL SECURITY GUARANTEES, BEFORE JORDAN CAN CONSIDER TAKING PART IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS; (2) FEAR IN JORDAN THAT INABILITY TO ACHIEVE A BREAKTHROUGH AT CAMP DAVID MIGHT PROMPT PARTICIPANTS TO ISSUE "A VAGUE AND UNCOMMITTED DOCUMENT", WHICH "WOULD BE UNHELPFUL" AND THAT IT WOULD BE "UNFAIR AND UNREALISTIC" TO EXPECT JORDAN TO SHIFT ITS STAND ON PRINCIPLES ON SUCH GROUNDS, IN THE ABSENCE OF GENUINE INDICATIONS OF A POSITIVE ISRAELI ATTITUDE ON SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS; AND (3) JORDAN'S DESIRE, IN ANY CASE, FOR A "COLLECTIVE APPROACH" TO MIDEAST PROBLEM FOLLOWING CAMP DAVID TALKS. TO THESE SHARAF LATER ADDED A FOURTH SUBSIDIARY POINT IN SECRET

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PAGE 03 AMMAN 06942 01 OF 02 290925Z

ALLUDING TO THE LETTER'S MENTION OF THE KING'S DESIRE TO REMAIN IN CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE SITUATION AFTER THE CAMP DAVID TALKS. (SHARAF ACTUALLY MENTIONED THE TERM "GETTING TOGETHER".)

3. IN REPLY, I MENTIONED THAT I STRONGLY HOPED JORDAN WOULD KEEP AN OPEN MIND REGARDING THE CAMP DAVID TALKS DESPITE THE PESSIMISTIC ASSESSMENT IN KING'S LETTER. I THEN ASKED SHARAF WHETHER JORDAN'S DESIRE FOR A RETURN TO "COLLECTIVE APPROACH" IN NEGOTIATIONS WOULD ALSO BE TRUE IF CAMP DAVID DID PRODUCE A REAL BREAKTHROUGH. SHARAF REPLIED "LET'S FACE IT, CAMP DAVID WILL NOT CHANGE BEGIN'S POSITION". IF NOT, THEN A "SAFETY NET" WILL BE REQUIRED TO MOVE PEACE PROCESS IN POSITIVE DIRECTION, AND THIS COULD TAKE FORM OF U. N. OR GENEVA CONFERENCE TAKING UP THE ISSUE, AND, FOR INSTANCE, DELIBERATING OVER PROPER MEANING OF RESOLUTION 242. I QUESTIONED SHARAF FURTHER ON WHAT MORE A U. N. EFFORT COULD ACCOMPLISH THAN CURRENT TALKS ARE DOING, BUT HE DID NOT GIVE A DIRECT REPLY.

4. IF, DESPITE JORDAN'S DOUBTS, A "BREAKTHROUGH" OCCURRED, SHARAF THOUGHT JORDAN WOULD STILL WANT A "COLLECTIVE

APPROACH" SINCE JORDAN BELIEVES ARAB CONSENSUS WITH SYRIA (PARTLY BECAUSE OF ITS LINKS WITH PLO), SAUDI ARABIA AND OTHERS IS BEST WAY FOR JORDAN TO PUSH FOR REAL PROGRESS IN NEGOTIATIONS.

5. SHARAF MENTIONED THAT JORDAN DOES NOT WANT TO "LOSE ITS CREDIBILITY AND SUBJECT ITSELF TO ATTACK BY NOW ENTERING INTO NEGOTIATIONS ALONE". HE ADDED THAT THIS IS NOT BECAUSE KING IS NOT COURAGEOUS. KING IS WILLING TO TAKE COURAGEOUS STEPS, AND HIS PAST RECORD IN NEGOTIATIONS

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 06942 02 OF 02 290913Z  
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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 AMMAN 06942

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PROVES THIS, BUT HIS CONSIDERED ASSESSMENT IS THAT JORDAN'S ENTERING NOW UNDER AMBIGUOUS TERMS WOULD NOT ADVANCE THE PEACE PROCESS AND SHARAF IMPLIED IT WOULD FURTHER ERODE ARAB CONSENSUS WHICH IS NECESSARY FOR REAL PROGRESS.

6. EMPHASIZING THAT I WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I THEN ASKED WHETHER JORDAN WOULD ADVOCATE "COLLECTIVE APPROACH" IF, FOR INSTANCE, U. S. CAME OUT UNILATERALLY WITH A GOOD STATEMENT ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. SHARAF TOOK THE POINT, BUT ARGUED THAT IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD BE FAR MORE EFFECTIVE FOR U. S. TO USE THIS CONGENIAL POSITION TO ATTRACT THE SUPPORT OF SYRIA, THE PALESTINIANS AND MODERATE ARABS FOR NEGOTIATIONS AND TO PUSH FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLUTION.

7. SHARAF REITERATED HIS POINT THAT BEST WAY FOR JORDAN TO OPERATE IS THROUGH PUSHING FOR AN ARAB COLLECTIVE APPROACH. HE SAID WHAT FORM THIS TAKES WILL DEPEND ON WHAT COURSE SADAT WILL WANT TO FOLLOW AFTER THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT.

8. I TALKED AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT NEED FOR JORDAN TO KEEP AN

OPEN MIND ON ITS POSITION UNTIL AFTER SUMMIT IS FINISHED.  
I SAID PRESIDENT CARTER TOOK HIS DECISION TO HOLD THE  
SUMMIT WITH THE FULLEST AWARENESS OF ALL THE FACTORS INVOLVED AND HE IS DETERMINED TO MAKE A MAXIMUM EFFORT TO  
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PAGE 02 AMMAN 06942 02 OF 02 290913Z

ACHIEVE REAL PROGRESS THERE. JORDAN SHOULD TRY NOT TO PREJUDGE SUMMIT'S OUTCOME OR REDUCE ITS ABILITY TO RESPOND FLEXIBLY IF THERE ARE SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS. I ALSO TOLD HIM THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS MAKING A MAJOR STEP IN INVOLVING HIMSELF PERSONALLY IN NEGOTIATIONS, SOMETHING THE ARABS HAVE ALWAYS WANTED PRESIDENT TO DO, AND THAT I THOUGHT THEY SHOULD GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO ACHIEVE RESULTS BEFORE PASSING JUDGMENT ON BEST FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION.

9. SHARAF TOOK ALL THESE POINTS AND SAID THAT OF COURSE JORDAN WILL WANT TO LOOK OBJECTIVELY AT SUMMIT RESULTS IN CONSULTATION WITH US, BUT THE KING'S LETTER REMAINS THEIR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AT THIS POINT AND THEY WANT U. S. TO KNOW CLEARLY THEIR POSITION IN ADVANCE OF THE TALKS.

10. I ASKED SHARAF ABOUT KING HUSSEIN'S MOST RECENT LETTER TO PRESIDENT SADAT, WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY. SHARAF SAID IT CONTAINS SAME GENERAL POSITION AS IN LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER. IN ADDITION IT OUTLINES IN SOME DETAIL JORDAN'S POSITION ON SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATING ASPECTS; ON WEST BANK, RESOLUTION 242, JERUSALEM AND PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION, "SO THERE WILL BE NO DOUBT IN SADAT'S MIND WHERE JORDAN STANDS ON THESE ISSUES." IN LATTER REGARD, JORDAN MADE POINT THAT PALESTINIANS (SHARAF SAID KING DID NOT SPECIFY PLO) SHOULD HELP CONSTRUCT ARAB NEGOTIATING POSITION AND NOT JUST BE ITS BENEFICIARIES. LETTER ALSO MENTIONED KING'S DESIRE TO CONSULT WITH SADAT FOLLOWING SUMMIT.

11. SHARAF REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES THAT JORDAN IS LOOKING FOR A POSITIVE COURSE IN NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT ITS DECISIONS MENTIONED IN KING'S LETTER REFLECT THEIR CONSIDERED ASSESS-  
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PAGE 03 AMMAN 06942 02 OF 02 290913Z

MENT OF BEST WAY TO PROCEED IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

12. COMMENT: I READ KING'S LETTER AS ESSENTIALLY A REPLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S AUGUST 15 LETTER IN WHICH KING STATES THAT THE ONLY KIND OF "AGREED FRAMEWORK" OR DECLARATION

WHICH COULD CAUSE KING TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS IS A VERY CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS INDICATION OF EVENTUAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORY OCCUPIED IN JUNE 1967 AND OF AGREEMENT TO A PROCESS LEADING TO PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION. LETTER ALSO PUTS US ON NOTICE THAT JORDAN CANNOT BE PERSUADED TO JOIN NEGOTIATIONS FOR ANYTHING SUBSTANTIALLY LESS AT THIS POINT. FURTHERMORE, KING'S SUGGESTION OF NEED FOR "COLLECTIVE FRAMEWORK" GOES A LONG WAY TOWARDS SAYING THAT PEACE PROCESS SHOULD BECOME COLLECTIVE EVEN IF THERE IS CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS AT CAMP DAVID. ALL OF THIS I AM SURE IS BASED ON BASIC JORDANIAN ASSESSMENT THAT NO REAL BREAKTHROUGH ON WEST BANK WITHDRAWAL OR PALESTINIAN ISSUES WILL OCCUR AT SUMMIT AND JORDAN WANTS TO MAKE CERTAIN THERE IS NO MISUNDERSTANDING OF ITS POSITION THAT IT DOES NOT WISH TO BE REQUESTED TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS MERELY AS A NEW PROCEDURAL ELEMENT TO KEEP PEACE EFFORT ALIVE. THIS POSITION DOES NOT ESSENTIALLY DIFFER FROM KING'S POSITION IN PAST MONTHS, BUT KING'S LETTER DOES STATE IT IN RATHER CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS TERMS. SUDDARTH

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PGOV, PPDC, JO, US, SHARAF, SHARIF, (HUSSEIN I), (CARTER, JIMMY), (SHARAF, SHARIF), (PEACE PLANS)  
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